

# Spartacist League/Britain

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## Open Letter to the Revolutionary Communist International:

### For united class-struggle defence to free political prisoners in Pakistan!

Dear comrades,

We extend our solidarity to you and your comrades in Gilgit-Baltistan and others of the Awami Action Committee Gilgit-Baltistan (AAC-GB) who are facing repression at the hands of the Pakistani state. It is an outrage that four more have since been arrested! We believe that an attack against one is an attack against all. Thus, to the extent possible, our comrades have joined your protests, for instance, in London, New York, Berlin and Toronto. If there is a defence fund, we would be happy to contribute.

Your comrades are up against a military state where political repression has intensified even more following the India-Pakistan war. The weeks since have seen arrests of others from oppositional forces: Salaar Fayyaz Ali of the Mazdoor Kisan Party and Asif Sakhi of Awami Workers Party Gilgit-Baltistan, to name just two. To maximise the pressure against the regime it is important to broaden the defence campaign and take up the cause of all leftist political prisoners. As part of this, we believe it is key that you appeal to the international left and trade union movement to build **united class-struggle** defence to exert real pressure on the Pakistani state.

The other crucial component in mobilising broader support at home and in the diaspora is to demand the release of former Prime Minister and leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Imran Khan, the most popular political prisoner rotting away at the behest of U.S. imperialism. We raise this call based on our understanding of the tasks of communists in Pakistan today: to lead the fight against the regime and U.S. imperialism, subjugation to which is the basis for the rampant corruption and repression in Pakistan. The defence of Khan and your comrades are fundamentally linked in that they both necessitate a struggle against the regime and U.S. imperialism.

The question of Khan has become an issue of contention between our two organisations since we raised it at your protest outside the Pakistani Consulate in London. Our placards with this slogan were blurred out from pictures that subsequently appeared on your website. The ensuing discussion with members of the RCI revealed to us the basis for disagreement: that Khan is a reactionary capitalist politician who has in the past presided over repression against political activists from Gilgit-Baltistan.

We do not raise the call to free Khan to “push our own agenda”, but because we think that raising this demand will advance the freedom of your comrades. This in line with the tactic of the united front: to unite in action around a common cause but maintain our own independent strategies.

We do not dispute that Khan is a bourgeois politician and that his government carried out attacks against progressive forces. But you must not overlook the fact that Khan has the support of the majority of the population because he challenged the status quo of Pakistani politics by going against U.S. diktats and for which he was thrown behind bars. The repression of Khan and his supporters is linked to the overall increase in political repression and the further subjugation of Pakistan to imperialism. It is the revolutionary duty of communists to take the lead in the fight against imperialism. By raising this demand, you will not only garner broader social support in defence of your comrades, but also advance the struggle against Pakistan’s subordination to imperialism.

We look forward continuing to support the struggle to free your comrades in Pakistan. *Free Ehsan Ali, comrades of the AAC-GB, and leftist political prisoners! Free Imran Khan! Inqalab Zindabad!*

Communist greetings,

Mansa Kaur

For Workers Hammer, newspaper of the Spartacist League Britain